



USS KEARSARGE (LHD 3)
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Kearsarge Delivers 12,434 Gallons of Water to Bangladesh

From USS Kearsarge Public Affairs

USS KEARSARGE, at sea – Sailors and Marines of the amphibious assault ship USS Kearsarge (LHD 3) and the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) continue to assist in the Bangladesh Humanitarian Relief efforts.

Kearsarge's flight deck was full of life as CH-46E "Sea Knight" and CH-53E "Super Stallion" helicopters made multiple trips from the ship to the Bangladesh cities of Barguna, Barisal, Patuakhali, Kalapara, Doblarchar and Zia.

"Water seems to be the Bangladeshi government's primary need at the moment," said Capt. James Gregorski, Commanding Officer, USS Kearsarge. "We've delivered over 12,000 gallons of water via helicopter to several different locations."

Eighteen Marine helicopters aboard Kearsarge are doing most of the heavy lifting, while two Navy helicopters transport personnel to and from the ship. The ship's three landing craft air cushion (LCAC), from Assault Craft Unit Four, are also helping deliver needed aid to the people of Bangladesh.

In addition to delivering water, one of the helicopters picked up a 12,000-pound medical kit donated by the World Health Organization and dropped it off Nov. 26 in the hard-hit Patuakhali region.

“The humanitarian operation went well,” said Marine Capt. David Pope, a CH-46E helicopter pilot from the embarked Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron (HMM) 261. “It feels good to help the people of Bangladesh. There are more people in need and I can’t wait to continue helping out.”

Preparing the water for delivery was an all-hands effort as members from the ship’s Supply, Engineering, Air and Combat Cargo Departments worked together as a “Blue-Green Team.”

Engineering Department made the water, using its evaporators, which produce 200,000 gallons of fresh water per day. Marines from the 22nd MEU (SOC) filled the water in bladders while helping Sailors and Marines from Air, Supply and Combat Cargo Departments load them in boxes and deliver them to the flight deck.

“The government of Bangladesh pledged to feed more than two million people left destitute by flooding, but washed-out roads have left many of the villages inaccessible,” said Gregorski. “That’s where our helicopters come in. The helos can distribute donated supplies from the mainland to remote villages.”

Kearsarge is also sending medical teams to areas of Bangladesh who are in desperate need of primary medical care. The III Marine Expeditionary Brigade purchased medical supplies, which will be used to treat Bangladeshi’s in areas where medical care is not readily accessible.

Kearsarge and the embarked 22nd MEU (SOC) are conducting Humanitarian Assistance/ Disaster Relief efforts in response to the Government of Bangladesh’s request for assistance after Tropical Cyclone Sidr struck their Southern coast Nov. 15. The storm killed over 3,000 people and has left several hundred thousand homeless. The

Department of Defense effort is part of a larger United States response coordinated by the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development.

Kearsarge reported for duty to assist in Bangladeshi humanitarian relief efforts on Thanksgiving Day and immediately began to transfer containers of water ashore.

Kearsarge is the flagship of the Kearsarge Strike Group, on a regularly scheduled deployment and departed its home port of Norfolk, Va., July 30.